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ABSTRACT

This supplementary report presents testimony on the community college transfer function given to the California Postsecondary Education Commission's Ad Hoc Committee on Community College Transfer. First, Paul Elsner discusses developments related to transfer and articulation with four-year institutions within the Maricopa Community College District (MCCD). Following background information on the district, Elsner discusses MCCD involvement in national projects conducted to develop transfer programs and improve humanities instruction; describes transfer developments in Arizona; and examines the district's course equivalency system, honors programs, and a transfer opportunity program at South Mountain Community College. He then responds to the Committee's questions regarding tuition, remedial programs, counseling, adult education, trends in student interest and course openings, and Hispanic enrollments. Next, Arthur Cohen begins his testimony by underscoring the importance of the transfer function in light of the fact that community colleges serve as the first point of entry to higher education for many who would not otherwise be able to attend college. He then considers problems in assessing the effectiveness of the transfer function, distinguishes transfer programs from liberal arts programs, discusses ways in which the transfer function can be enhanced, and suggests ways the Ad Hoc Committee could serve its purposes. Finally, minutes of the June 11, 1984, meeting of the Committee are presented. (HB)

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Views From the Field on Community College Transfer

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Testimony to the Ad Hoc Committee on Community College Transfer of the California Postsecondary Education Commission

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The Commission consists of 15 members. Nine represent the general public, with three each appointed by the Speaker of the Assembly, the Senate Rules Committee, and the Governor. The other six represent the major educational systems of the State.

The Commission holds regular public meetings throughout the year at which it takes action on staff studies and adopts positions on legislative proposals affecting postsecondary education. Further information about the Commission, its meetings, its staff, and its other publications may be obtained from the Commission offices at 1020 Twelfth Street, Sacramento, California 95814; telephone (916) 445-7933.

VIEWS FROM THE FIELD
ON COMMUNITY COLLEGE TRANSFER

Testimony to the Ad Hoc Committee on Community College Transfer of the California Postsecondary Education Commission

SUPPLEMENT

CALIFORNIA POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION COMMISSION
1020 Twelfth Street, Sacramento, California 95814

This supplement to Commission Report 84-20 is being sent to all recipients of the original report. Future printings of the report will concain the testimony included here.

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TESTIMONY OF PAUL ELSNER

Chancellor, Maricopa County Community College District, Arizona

Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee, it is a pleasure for me to be here. I do not regard myself as an expert in the area of transfer and articulation, but the Colleges I preside over have had some success with transfer programs. The Maricopa County Community College District has seven community colleges and covers 9,100 square miles of Arizona. The seven institutions are Scottsdale Community College, Mesa Community College, Phoenix College, Maricopa Technical Community College, Glendale College, South Mountain Community College, and Rio Salado Community College, which is our nontraditional college. We have about 800 full-time faculty. Our operating budget is about $120 million. By the year 2000, our population is expected to double. In the next ten years, 850,000 people are likely to settle in our valley, which presents some problems. The District is currently developing a $160-million capital development plan, and we have a $75-million bond election scheduled for September 25. We will open three new campuses if that bond issue passes.

Historically, Arizona has not had a multipartite system of higher education nor a three-tier system. There are only really two systems, other than one private liberal arts college -- Grand Canyon College -- and some proprietary institutions. The Community Colleges represent in a major way a feeder to the University of Arizona and Arizona State University. That is probably why we enjoy a bit more success than some other states in our transfer function, since we do not have four-year general colleges that would further divert students.

We enroll 66,000 credit students and another 55,000 to 58,000 non-credit students. Our enrollment is about 7.4 percent Hispanic, while the population in the Phoenix area is about 14 percent Hispanic. Our area has a very small percentage of Black residents -- between 3.8 to 4.2 percent -- and our enrollment exceeds that, at 4.5 percent. Our Native American residents represent a fairly large proportion of our county's population, but not a large percentage of our institutions' students -- only about 2.5 percent. For some reason or another we generate in our Hispanic enrollments about half of what is represented by the Hispanic cross-section of the population.

Our district is part of a statewide system, but it is essentially locally supported and locally controlled. About 22 percent of our money comes from the state, which is the opposite, I understand, of California. About 67 percent comes from the local property tax, and tuition constitutes about 10 percent of our income. Tuition is $14.00 per credit hour. We have the full range of financial aid; we try not to deny any student because of cost, and we make special provisions for students to waive tuition if we need to.

Note: This testimony was presented at the June 11, 1984, meeting of the Ad Hoc Committee on Community College Transfer of the California Postsecondary Education Commission, held in Sacramento.

NATIONAL INVOLVEMENT

Among several national initiatives in which we are involved, we were the only community college district that participated in defining the baccalaureate degree for the Association of American Colleges, along with four-year colleges and universities like Grinnell College, Hampshire College, and Carnegie-Mellon University. Thus we represented the only institutions devoted to the "lower division" curriculum: the nation's junior and community colleges. That participation has moved us to reexamine and redefine our associate of arts degree requirements, our core requirements, and the common learning in our institutions.

We have one of the 24 community colleges working with the staff of the Ford Foundation to come up with model transfer programs -- in our case, South Mountain Community College, which is an institution that serves primarily blue-collar white, Hispanic, and Black students. We are working to encourage students through that program to transfer to Arizona State University. The program, which I will describe at greater length in a few minutes, focuses primarily on orientation, faculty mentoring, and a special University-connected program where University faculty members trade courses on our campuses.

Through a grant from the federal Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education (FIPSE), we have participated in the FIPSE-Motorola Project, in which we helped move 100 women from the assembly line and into supervisory positions in the semiconductor industry. These women had strong engineering technology backgrounds, but we gave them everything from college chemistry to advanced mathematics and some physics. We had 100 percent retention, and many of the participants are continuing their studies in the engineering school of Arizona State University -- resulting in the program being a model for transferability.

With four other large community college districts, we have participated in a Carnegie-Mellon Grant program designed to strengthen humanities instruction. We have just finished the largest grant ever given to a community college to develop interdisciplinary studies through our Southwest Studies program. We are currently involved with the League for Innovation and community colleges in Miami, Dallas, St. Louis, and Cleveland, as well as the College Board, the American College Testing Program, the Educational Testing Service, the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education, and other agencies in trying to develop a national model student tracking program so that we will know more about where our students go, both in terms of transfer and reverse transfer to and from universities as well as into jobs and careers.

TRANSFER IN ARIZONA

In Arizona, the transfer of community college students to Arizona State University appears alive and well. We have been cited nationally as a model

by Richard Richardson and Donald Doucette in the Community and Junior College Journal for the success of our transfer students in specific upper-division programs at Arizona State University. Arizona State is not a selective-admissions university in the sense that the University of California is. It only recently addressed the upgrading of its admission standards, and so the flow of students from our community college system to it is characteristically different than from California Community Colleges to the University of California. Arizona State is comparatively far less selective than any of your institutions. Forty-four percent of its full-time juniors come from the Maricopa County Community Colleges, as do 50 percent of its upper classmen in the college of business administration, nearly 70 to 75 percent in business departments like finance and marketing, and 90 percent in its department of technology and college of engineering. Ten percent of the upper-division students at the University of Arizona come from the Maricopa Community Colleges, but our numbers will probably never be as large there because it is 127 miles away from us.

The Maricopa Community College District is working to improve the movement of students between its community colleges and universities, primarily through the Academic Program Articulation Steering Committee, appointed by the joint committee of the Arizona Board of Regents and the State Board of Directors for the Community Colleges of Arizona. We are fortunate that we are a small-enough state that we can pick up the phone or walk across the street to confer with people in the universities, whereas California is a very large and complex state to try to coordinate.

Articulation between the Maricopa Community Colleges and Arizona State University is a multi-faceted program. Our Office of Educational Development and the University's Office of Academic Affairs are headed by a vice chancellor and a vice president, respectively, who meet once a month to discuss matters of mutual concern on articulation policy. We have a course-to-course articulation process. The results are published in our Arizona course equivalency guide, which for a long time has shown courses taught by each community college and their equivalent courses at each university. The problem with this guide is that it does not always include the most recent and sometimes unilateral department changes that take place from semester to semester and thus needs constant review and updating.

One of the goals of the Maricopa District and the state is to develop a pure academic transfer degree which we do not yet have and which would guarantee that students earning it could transfer as juniors to the University without having to take additional lower-division courses. Universities have difficulty, as we sometimes do among our seven colleges, gaining agreement across their various departments and their colleges on such a plan, but we have had strong expressions of support from the University administration.

Even without this degree, the University's transfer enrollment looks like an inverted pyramid, in that many of its junior- and senior-year courses are quite large because we are a major feeder to them. The University has discovered that we are a very important market for them, and it makes sure that articulation agreements work very well between our institutions. We find the discussions and dialogue between the institutions are very positive and very problem solving in tone.

DEVELOPMENT OF COURSE EQUIVALENCY WITHIN THE DISTRICT AND WITH THE UNIVERSITY

Every course that is developed in the Maricopa Community Colleges is reviewed and approved by one of 44 instructional councils that are faculty disciplinary committees representing all seven colleges. There are several instructional councils, for example, a physics council, a history council, and an English instructional council for all seven colleges. Every new course has to go through this faculty review process.

Those instructional councils are also charged with the responsibility of managing a great deal of our articulation and curriculum relationships with the universities. We also have community college representatives on the curriculum committees at the University and a University representative on our district curriculum committee.

We hope by the Fall of 1985 to have a common numbering system for all our courses that will include a common prefix number and title. In two or three more years, we hope to add three more common elements for these courses -- descriptions, credits, and prerequisites. Another area under serious consideration is what we call our "two-plus-two" articulation program, in which the University builds two additional years on our two-year occupational programs. While the first intent of our occupational programs is to prepare students for immediate entry into the labor market, we have found that many of our graduates want to continue their education. Fifty-two of our programs have been selected for articulation into the industrial supervision baccalaureate of science degree program at Arizona State University. The next step will be to design a format for expressing electronically the relationship of these programs to the industrial supervision program in order to update the program information instantly when modifications are made. We have on-line registration at our campuses and are discussing with University administrators the possibility of electronic transcripts so that when our transfer students enroll there, their transcripts are built into a University transcript file.

HONORS PROGRAM

Next, I would like to review very quickly our honors program. The Maricopa County Community College District operates a district-wide honors program for all seven colleges, coordinated by a district-wide faculty committee. The governing board puts in a quarter of a million dollars a year for honors and has just implemented a $50,000 resident scholar program. We are now into our third year of the honors program, which operates with a different theme each year. The first year the theme was "The Impact of Technology on the Individual," and we brought in as resident scholars for that program professors from the University of Minnesota, Princeton, and Yale, and a captain in the Navy. We have found that community college students do not have the advantage of residential students in meeting people from high places in the dining hall and in other informal settings. It is our hope

that we can provide that kind of opportunity on a continuing basis, through each year's theme.

This year's theme was "The Human Expression -- A Celebration." This allowed us to bring into the Maricopa Colleges architects, artists, writers, and other creative people and we shared them with the community at large. Next year's theme will be "Living With the Information Age." The faculty and the students participate in the selection of those themes as well as the resident scholars, and the program has been very successful.

As part of the honors program, we have begun relationships for transfer to a number of institutions across the country. We are currently in negotiations, for example, with Georgetown University, so that three of our students will be able to transfer there each year on Maricopa's recommendation. We already have similar relationships with Grand Canyon College and Brigham Young University. It is our hope to have 50 such relationships established and running routinely for honors students in our colleges who want to transfer to other places besides Arizona State University.

FORD FOUNDATION PROGRAM

Turning briefly to our Ford Foundation urban community college transfer opportunity program at South Mountain Community College, we have broken this program into three parts: (1) a college orientation program for students who are identified as potential transfer students and who are matched very closely with support personnel from the college; (2) a mentors program, where these students are adopted by faculty members, with no more than five students for each faculty member; and (3) a university orientation program, where faculty from Arizona State University teach courses in our colleges to establish a bridging or linking relationship with these students. The program appears to be working very effectively. We don't have 100 percent retention, but we are close to it and it looks like our students are doing well in their initial work at the University.

CONCLUSION

In summary, we are proud of such projects as these, but I do not want to imply that we at the Maricopa Colleges should take major credit for them. The governance arrangements in our state are simple compared to those of a very complex state like California, and I think that much of our initiative has to do with the historical patterns of Arizona, in which higher education is basically not a multi-tiered, tripartite system but rather one in which we operate as a feeder to the University.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Commissioner Gandara: Has Maricopa's current tuition policy traditionally been your policy?

Chancellor Elsner: No. I recommended a tuition policy to the governing board about six years ago, and we have moved steadily from no tuition to $14 a credit hour.

Commissioner Gandara: Have you seen any changes in the enrollment of your lower-income population as a result?

Chancellor Elsner: No. Our enrollment has been increasing about 3.5 to 4 percent in the aggregate for the district each year.

Commissioner Gandara: Is your aid sufficient to cover all student need that you are aware of?

Chancellor Elsner: Yes, I believe so.

Commissioner Leonard: Do you operate many remedial courses, and are they credit or non-credit?

Chancellor Elsner: Only 5 percent of our courses can be classified as remedial, and many of them are non-credit. We are currently developing a core requirement under which many of our remedial courses will be completely knocked out for credit. I don't want to say that remediation is not transferable because the universities are teaching a lot of remedial courses.

Chairperson Pettitt: I gather from your comments about your on-line admissions, enrollment, and matriculation program that you aim for the ability to follow those students who either drop out or transfer to one of the four-year institutions.

Chancellor Elsner: That is correct.

Chairperson Pettitt: Is that terribly expensive?

Chancellor Elsner: It is very complex, even with just one university in the same community.

Commissioner Gandara: What percentage of your entering students are in transfer kinds of programs -- in other words, in academic courses?

Chancellor Elsner: If we can rely on the information that students provide us with during advisement, it is exactly 50 percent. In other words, about half of our students are in technical and vocational programs. This percentage has not changed much over the last eight to ten years.

Commissioner Gandara: Of the 50 percent of the students who claim that they intend to transfer or intend to earn a four-year degree, what percentage actually transfer?

Chancellor Elsner: It is probably higher than we think, because of the intermittent enrollment of our students. We have a 40 percent turnover of students every year. We really don't have very good data on where our students are going, when they are dropping out, and when they are coming back. I believe that we are probably in worse shape than California in this respect, in that you have your Committee and Commission to look at these data systematically, while our data are very poor on tracking students from system to system.

Commissioner Farber: Could you comment on the role and number of counselors in your transfer system?

Chancellor Elsner: I don't know how many counselors we have on each campus, and we have various practices on advisement in our system. For example, one college requires faculty to advise, and another college allows faculty to volunteer for advisement. Our advisement system is basically a faculty-driven system, and counseling in our district is not an elaborate system in terms of a counseling complex. In fact there is a great deal of randomness in our system about student choice -- where they go, how they get there, what they do, and what decisions they make.

Commissioner Laval: Do your high schools still have counselors to do what counselors are supposed to do?

Chancellor Elsner: Yes, the counseling apparatus in the high school is basically college oriented, and we have been working with the high schools to try to raise the consciousness on the part of high school principals and counselors about community college opportunities. I don't know how that compares to California, but we feel it is pretty high. We think some of the reason is general marketing, in that we spend well over $1 million each year on marketing and advertising, much of which is directed to high school students.

Commissioner Laval: What is the average age of the students on your campuses?

Chancellor Elsner: It is 29, but there are some very young students and also very mature and older students. At our nontraditional college, the average age is 37, which is practically 10 years older than the average student, and we don't know why.

Commissioner Laval: Do your K-12 school districts offer adult education?

Chancellor Elsner: They do, but it is very limited. We carry much of the adult education in our community, and the full cost is passed on to the public in Arizona, which I think is really a very striking contrast to California. If a student is from out-of-state, he or she must pay the actual cost, which is $2,900 at Maricopa. Thus students in non-credit courses pay a great deal of money. If they take courses for credit, they pay $14 per credit hour.

Commissioner Gandara: With respect to counseling, you say that your program is essentially faculty driven. Are the faculty given paid time to provide counseling?

Chancellor Elsner: It varies from campus to campus, with some of it on a voluntary basis, while others are under certain kinds of contracts to do it. We do not have a uniform bargaining agreement for the district, such as you might have in California.

TRENDS IN STUDENT INTEREST AND COURSE OFFERINGS

Commissioner Leonard: With respect to courses, is there a trend in changing courses -- for example, to more technical fields and away from the humanities or liberal arts?

Chancellor Elnser: I think that the liberal arts are on a steady decline in our system, although the transfer objective seems to be holding its own pretty well, perhaps because of our "two-plus-two" arrangments. Many technology programs more selectively choose students for admission than liberal arts programs. In the medical records technology program at Phoenix College, the waiting list is routinely 150 students. Those applicants have good math scores and fairly good science scores so the faculty can select the best students. We have qualifications for admission to many of these programs.

Even though the liberal arts are suffering in all of higher education, I think that community colleges are particularly vulnerable if we don't make special provisions for them as an incentive for our students. The efforts that we have made have largely been episodic and isolated to individual campuses. To give an example, at Phoenix College, we've required common reading lists for liberal arts students and vocational students, including nursing, medical records technology, and electronics students. They may all be reading Madame Bovary or some other book from a common list in the college. This has been an incredibly successful program -- but an extraordinarily difficult one to coordinate. In one of the discussion groups, students from the nursing division were arguing that Madame Bovary was a victim of entrapment. Another group of students from another division took a moralistic point of view, saying that one is responsible for his or her decisions and their consequences throughout all of life. Some liberal arts students were arguing that Madame Bovary was a victim of romanticism and of reading romantic gothic novels and that she had no real sense of the reality of life. Vocational/technical students are quite capable of critical thinking and are no less intellectually oriented when given such opportunities as the Phoenix College interdisciplinary studies program. Often vocational/technical students are quite sophisticated because of their maturity and varied life experiences.

I think we need to be mindful that when we create community colleges of 20,000, 30,000 or 40,000 students, it is very difficult to create an interdisciplinary environment or a collegiate setting where any kind of critical thinking or problem solving can be taught. That is one argument for keeping community colleges small, and we have some small ones.

Commissioner Leonard: Do you feel that your "human expression" theme in the honors program had any impact in that area?

Chancellor Elsner: Yes, it has. We are looking at our district-wide honors program and trying to see how it can better undergird campus programs such as I have just described.

Commissioner Kaplan: Do your major subjects cover such fields as computer literacy?

Chancellor Elsner: Yes, Maricopa has made incredible commitments to compute technology and literacy. The general education requirements just promulgated by a committee of over 200 faculty and reviewed by the governing board and now on their way to adoption have a computer literacy requirement in them. We have a very rich computing environment in our district. We have close to 2,000 micro-processors in our campus environment alone. In the last four years, our governing board has put over $6 million into computing facilities in our district, and our current capital development program calls for $30 million worth of telecommunications and computing equipment. So we feel that this area, of all of the areas that I have talked about, is one of the most innovative at Maricopa.

HISPANIC ENROLLMENTS

Director Callan: One of the concerns that California and Arizona share is about ethnic minority enrollments and the success of minority students -- especially Hispanic students in the higher education system. Would you talk specifically about whether you have had to devise any special strategies to deal with this set of concerns in regard to transfer?

Chancellor Elsner: The South Mountain College Ford Foundation project is a model that we believe works well because one special feature of it involves having a university orientation program taught by university staff at the College. We have very solid evidence that if a student transfers after only one year with us, his or her chances of success in a university are significantly less than if he or she stays with us for two years. However, universities are vigorous in recruiting minorities out of community colleges, and we haven't been able to work out a solution.

Another reason for the success of the South Mountain program is its support system. An average of 250 academic survival calls are made each week to students to check on where they are, and if there is a crisis in the family, and if someone has to talk to the probation officer, and so forth. Basically, the average socioeconomically disadvantaged community college student has the economic system collapsing under him or her almost all of the time. He or she may be trying to carry a minimum-wage job in one part of the county, and the car won't start; and so to complete the program requires overcoming one crisis after another. Thus I think that in every case where we have had success, there has been an elaborate support system to help.

Commissioner Gandara: I am interested in what you are doing to bring your Hispanic enrollment up to parity with your Hispanic population.

Chancellor Elsner: Overall, as I mentioned, our Hispanic population enrolls at only about half the rate of all our population, but at South Mountain Community College, we have reached the Hispanic population in that part of the county in excess of its share of the population. In fact, when South Mountain was recently raided by immigration authorities, we were embarrassed to find that out of the 80 illegal aliens in the State who were getting student financial aid, 40 of them were at South Mountain.

Hispanic underrepresentation is a very complex problem, and I don't know how we can overcome it entirely. But I think we have been successful where we have support systems, where we have had recruitment, and where we have identification with the problem and pursued it on some kind of systematic basis. For example, I feel that we have had success where we have had significant numbers of faculty of Hispanic background on the campus. This is certainly the case at South Mountain, where 70 percent of the faculty are Hispanic. We have an advisory group to the chancellor that works with identifiying areas of the problem. We are planning to have an advisory group for the marketing and the public relations staff on Hispanic needs. We have devoted part of our staff development program among both managers and professional staff to the topic of diversity and quality, so that faculty and staff can work with diversity and understand the differences between students on a more systematic basis. We are also fortunate in having two outstanding national Hispanic leaders serving as top management in our district -- Vice Chancellor Alfredo de los Santos and President Raul Cardenas. We also have an active faculty recruitment program to bring more Hispanic leaders into our professional ranks. Some strides that we have made in this area have been largely due to outstanding role models who have been thoughtful about moving initiatives in our system.

Chairperson Pettitt: Dr. Elsner, we are very grateful to you for sharing with us your successes and your problems. What you have talked about during the last half hour tells us that we do have a lot of common problems. Thank you very much.

REFERENCE

Richardson, Richard C., Jr., and Doucette, Donald S. "The Transfer Function: Alive and Well in Arizona." Community and Junior College Journal, 52:8 (May 1982) 10-13.

TESTIMONY OF ARTHUR M. COHEN

President, Center for the Study of Community Colleges;
Professor of Higher Education, University of California,
Los Angeles; and Director, ERIC Clearinghouse
for Junior Colleges

I am pleased that the Commission has organized a committee on community college transfer. The issue of transfer has attained prominence recently, and people look to the Commission for some information on it. This activity is one of the most important that the Commission will perform this year.

My own knowledge of transfer stems from my activities in a number of projects studying the issue. These projects began in 1974 and have continued for the past ten years under grants from the National Endowment for the Humanities, the National Science Foundation, the Ford Foundation, and the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. My colleagues and I have collected data on transfer education in community colleges nationwide, including student enrollment patterns, faculty attitudes, curriculum presented, and administrative concerns. We also have information about the connections between community colleges and the sending and receiving institutions -- the secondary schools and universities -- in their immediate area. And, as director of the ERIC Clearinghouse for Junior Colleges, I have ready access to the numerous reports flowing into that document base, many of them coming from the Commission's own files. Your staff, particularly Dorothy Knoell, have been generous in sharing their reports with us, and indeed with the nation.

IMPORTANCE OF THE TRANSFER FUNCTION

I should begin with the premise that I am an advocate for transfer education in community colleges. The function is important because the community colleges serve as the point of first entry to higher education for many people who would not otherwise be able to attend college. More than one-third of the people beginning college in America begin in a community college, and the figures are much higher for members of minority groups. The community colleges attract low-income students as well. The institutions are an essential component of a democratic system of higher education -- one that seeks to acculturate the citizenry and to make opportunity for further education available to all. In this the community college has its roots in the idea of the common school -- one that would be attended by nearly everyone in the community so that they would develop the shared understandings so necessary for the maintenance of social cohesion.

Note: This testimony was presented at the June 11, 1984 meeting of the Ad Hoc Committee on Community College Transfer of the California Postsecondary Education Commission, held in Sacramento.

The issue of transfer has come to the fore only recently. Five years ago, the rhetoric emanating from the community colleges centered on the theme of access: access for all people of any age and for any purpose. More recently, outcomes have become a matter of concern, as educators at all levels have realized that attracting people to their institution is only the first part of the task; the people must be provided with an education that reveals itself in their having gained knowledge useful to them as thinking individuals, productive citizens, and members of their community.

QUESTIONS ABOUT THE TRANSFER FUNCTION

One of the questions swirling around transfer as a general theme is on the community colleges' effect on different segments of the population. The median age of community college students is 21½ years; the population is heavily skewed toward people just out of high school who are beginning their college career. Have these matriculants jeopardized their chance to gain the baccalaureate by beginning their career in a community college? The data are incomplete and scanty.

The first problem is that no one knows exactly how many students begin in a community college and eventually transfer. The pattern is confounded by people who transfer after one semester; people who begin at the university, return to the community college for a time, and then transfer to the university once again; people who take courses at a local community college and university branch concurrently; those who start at a community college and stop out for a couple of years before entering the university, and so on. Nationwide, probably fewer than five percent of the students who begin at a community college complete two years there and then transfer to a university. Probably another 7 or 8 percent begin at a community college and transfer without completing two years. But those figures are merely educated guesses based on incomplete data from various states. This Committee would do a great service if it recommended ways that the Commission could improve the collection of data regarding community college transfers in California.

Reliable data sets can be established, but the community colleges themselves cannot do so; they are not equipped to collect such information. A few years ago the California Statewide Longitudinal Study offered an example of the way such data could be aggregated, but that study required extramural funding to complete. All three sectors of higher education must cooperate in organizing a system to collect transfer information. The California State University has begun such a data collection system that could be encouraged. It provides the community colleges with at least an estimate of their students transferring to one or another State University campus. However, it does not include the University of California or the private universities, and it has other weaknesses -- for example, a student may have attended a community college for a year, taken one course at another college, put that latter college down as the "college last attended" and thus confounded the data set. Because of California's liberal admissions and transfer policies, it is difficult to organize a system that provides reliable data on a statewide basis. In order to organize such a system, decisions will have to be made about the relative importance of reliable, comparable statewide data and

data gathered and presented in a fashion that best suits individual sending and receiving institutions.

Some states are further advanced in their data collection efforts. Washington and Maryland aggregate data across their higher education systems. The Florida university system and the Florida State Department of Commerce prepare a tape each year which contains the social security numbers of students who have entered a state university or who have obtained employment. The tape is made available to community colleges so that they can run it against their own records and at least get an estimate of the number of their students who have transferred or who have gone to work. The tape is incomplete because it does not include students who have transferred to private universities within the state or to any universities out of state, but it offers a step in the right direction.

Some groups have questioned whether the effect of the community college on a student's chances to gain a baccalaureate is different for minority and majority group students. Allegations of differential treatment or at least differential effects on minority students have been made, but here again the data are scanty. Many of the reports assume a black box: since more minority students enter community colleges than universities, and since fewer community college matriculants eventually receive baccalaureate degrees as compared with students who begin their career as freshmen in a university, then the community college must be doing something that militates against minority group student transfer. No one has documented exactly what that something might be. Most who have tried have contrasted community college and university environments. However, the researcher studying the question of community college effect should compare differential treatment across community colleges, not between community colleges and universities. The reason is that for most of the people who begin their higher education career in a community college, the university freshman class is not an option; hence to say that the community college treats its students differently from the university makes for interesting but useless comparisons. Furthermore, it is not possible to duplicate the university environment in a community college. No community college has a library with a million or more volumes, a faculty comprised of doctoral-level people engaged in scholarly inquiry, a selective admissions policy that ensures a student peer group of high academic achievement. In sum, to say that the university environment is different and that this difference may account for the higher proportion of university freshmen going on to the baccalaureate makes no sense at all.

Another question relates to the community colleges' success in assisting people to achieve their goals. How many students enter the community college with the intention of obtaining a baccalaureate degree? Surveys asking that question reveal incredibly high numbers, as high as 80 percent. Further examination of the data reveal that students who are obviously taking only a few courses preparing them to obtain immediate employment still say that they intend getting higher degrees. Few want to admit that they have closed off life's options. Accordingly, relating degree attainment to declared intention is precarious.

A different kind of question regarding transfer education can be raised regarding college procedures: What is the "transfer program?" To qualify for the definition "program," a set of activities should have coherence,

direction, support services, internal monitoring procedures, and so on. This form of organization applies most directly to the occupational programs in community colleges but not to the activities designed to lead students to transfer. Occupational programs have selected entry, sequenced curriculum, enforced prerequisities, especially designated staff, coordinated student job-placement functions, and usually some form of student followup. The transfer-related activities are by no means so organized. This may account for the fact that since 1975, community colleges have awarded more associate degrees to graduates of occupational programs than to graduates of so-called transfer programs.

DISTINGUISHING TRANSFER PROGRAMS FROM LIBERAL ARTS PROGRAMS

For these and other reasons, it is important to separate transfer education from the liberal arts in any view of the community college. The liberal arts -- the sciences, social sciences, humanities, mathematics, and fine arts -- have a long history in community colleges and, of course an even longer history in senior institutions. Sixty years ago, 75 percent of the community college curriculum centered on the liberal arts. Currently just over 50 percent of community college enrollments are in liberal arts courses. These courses are usually designated as meeting general requirements for academic credit awarded by the local institution and by the senior college to which the student may eventually transfer. The courses are similar to those offered in the lower division of universities, and their content and instructional media are often modeled on those presented in the senior institutions, although many community colleges have modified course requirements to fit their own students. Many of the courses are presented at a remedial level; in six of the largest community college districts in the nation, 60 percent of the mathematics taught is considered remedial, and 35 percent of the English is similarly below college level.

The liberal arts courses are taken by community college students expecting eventually to transfer, by students in occupational programs fulfilling graduation or program requirements, and by adults seeking such courses for their personal interest. The courses may carry academic transfer credit, but this points up why the liberal arts and transfer students must be conceptualized separately. In the six large districts that we are studying, 56 percent of the students say that their primary purpose for attending college is "preparation for transfer," and 52 percent of the enrollments are in liberal arts courses. Thus just over half the students are taking liberal arts classes. But those two groups are not the same; just as half the students are <u>not</u> preparing for transfer, at least half that group is taking transfer courses. And at least half the students who <u>are</u> taking transfer courses are not intending to transfer. Thus to understand the <u>liberal arts</u> in the community colleges, one must look to the content and presentation of courses in the transfer program, the occupational programs, and in the community education or non-credit areas. To understand the <u>transfer function</u>, one must look to the students intending to transfer and actually transferring -- not just to the liberal arts course enrollments.

ENHANCING THE TRANSFER FUNCTION

Our studies of the transfer function nationwide have yielded other findings. We have learned that articulation of curriculum and transfer information varies considerably from institution to institution and from district to district. Some community colleges have clearcut articulation agreements with senior institutions and articulation committees comprised of staff members from both levels who meet regularly to work out curriculum and transfer information agreements. But in others there is total silence and lack of agreement on what is transferable and what is not. Furthermore the articulation of curriculum between community colleges and high schools in each region is typically much worse than between colleges and the universities; we found no regularly functioning committee working on curriculum articulation and transfer between high school and community college.

In some states, common course numbering systems have been adopted as a way of enhancing the process of students transferring from one institution to another. Naturally, a common course numbering system helps, but as long as the staff in any academic department at a senior institution has the right of acceptance or refusal of courses for graduation credit in that department, common course numbering is by no means enough. As an example, students who transfer from Richland College in the Dallas Community College District to the University of Texas at Arlington may have their courses accepted at full value, whereas transfer from Mountain View College in the same district may not.

For students to stay for two years at a community college and then transfer to a university, a full array of second year, sophomore-level courses must be offered. In most community colleges, however, those courses are severely attenuated because of the shortfall in enrollment at the sophomore level. As long as students may transfer without obtaining an associate of arts or sciences degree, as long as they may transfer after having only taken introductory courses at the community college, the two-year institutions will have difficulty in attracting enough sophomore-level students to fill their courses. Accordingly they offer fewer sophomore-level courses and fewer students stay for the second year. A downward spiral takes effect. This shows up in examining curriculum data.

In the Los Angeles Community College District, enrollment in courses for which there is a prerequisite in the same discipline accounts for 14 percent of enrollments in the humanities, 14 percent in the social sciences, 17 percent in the sciences, 11 percent in mathematics, and 7 percent in English. Nearly all the enrollment in those areas is in introductory and remedial classes.

We have learned also that any review of faculty characteristics or of instructional expenditures in community colleges sheds little light on issues pertaining to transfer. Faculty tenure policies, the ratio of full-time to part-time instructors, and the presence or absence of collective bargaining agreements show no relationship to patterns of student transfer. Similarly faculty salaries -- the prime component in the cost of instruction -- are not related. There is a relationship between class size and transfer rates,

but this seems to result from the fact that sophomore-level courses are almost always smaller than introductory classes.

The most effective activities enhancing transfer seem to be those in which a single community college works out transfer agreements with the senior institutions in its immediate area. Instead of statewide articulation agreements, which almost always fall short of enhancing transfer, transfer has been made more feasible in areas where pairs of institutions work out arrangements at the department or program level. An example of these types of agreements is afforded by reviewing the process operating in Phoenix between Arizona State University and the Maricopa Community College District. There, committees comprised of members of both institutions meet program-by-program to design curriculum and student information systems that enhance the flow from one institution to another. Their success is suggested by the fact that 40 percent of Arizona State University's junior class is comprised of transfers from the Maricopa District. The University limits the number of freshmen it will take, and because the alternative for students living in Phoenix and environs is to go to one of the seven colleges in the Maricopa District, those colleges enroll a high proportion of freshmen and sophomores who will transfer. Furthermore, the University anticipates receiving those transfers and makes special provisions for them. Curriculum in some of the paired programs is designed so that the University does not even offer the freshman courses in those programs but insists that students transfer to it after having already had such introductory courses in the community colleges. In sum, articulation agreements work best when they are arranged at the program level between pairs of institutions in the same neighborhood. This suggests that transfer would be enhanced in California to the extent that Pierce College works with California State University, Northridge; Chabot College with California State University, Hayward, and so on. Santa Barbara City College and the University of California at Santa Barbara are well along with such agreements and jointly conceived programs.

Other efforts to enhance transfer can be made. Structural changes in community colleges to enhance student flow are particularly effective. Miami-Dade Community College has received much publicity for its rate of student retention and transfer. Since 1975 it has had a distinct commitment to enhance its transfer numbers and to hold students for the full two years or as long as it takes to prepare them for transfer. This past year, Miami-Dade awarded associate degrees to around one-fourth of its student population -- a ratio considerably higher than that in any other large public community college. It was also able to boast that it provided one-sixth of all the transfers in the state of Florida -- a number made all the more notable by the fact that Florida's major state universities are between 250 and 500 miles from Miami. A comparable figure for California would be revealed if the Los Angeles Community College District provided one-sixth of the transfers entering the University of California campuses at Berkeley, Davis, and Santa Cruz and the California State University campuses at Hayward, San Luis Obispo, and Fresno.

How did Miami-Dade do it? Curriculum reformation is part of the story. The college built an honors program to attract the better students from the Miami high schools and offered full tuition scholarships to students from the top 10 percent of their graduating classes. Miami-Dade enrolls nearly 40 percent of that top student group. But the college also built a support system that has had even greater effect. By designing a full complement of

remedial courses and by testing students at entry, it was able to place students in courses where they had a chance for success. It imposed a limit on drop-in students who, after having enrolled in four courses, are precluded from enrolling in the fifth until they have taken a placement test in English and mathematics and enter a program leading to a degree or certificate. It invoked standards of academic progress and enforced probation and suspension on students who were not making satisfactory progress toward completing a degree. It designed a computer-generated response system with variable prescription that informs students each semester of their progress toward completing the program in which they are enrolled. It built an academic graduation information system that shows students exactly what courses are required for transfer to each branch of the state university and each department within that branch. This latter system is readily accessible so that a student may walk into a counseling office, have his or her record placed on a screen, and see exactly which courses are needed to complete the transfer requirements in any program.

WORK OF THE AD HOC COMMITTEE

To return to California and the work of the Ad Hoc Committee, the Committee may have asked too much too soon. The Committee's interim report of June 11 shows a plethora of concerns, few of which can be addressed adequately because of the limited data base. As an example, considering a student a transfer based on the student's own statement of the college last attended is too unreliable a definition. Might the definition better involve the college where the student earned the majority of his or her lower-division units? What is the minimum number of units a student may earn at a community college and still be called a transfer student when he or she enters the university?

One thing that might help in obtaining better data is for the Committee to recommend a common entry form so that students applying for admission to any Community College University, or State University campus state their name, age, social security number, ethnicity, primary reason for attending college, career aspiration, program choice, and so on. The form could have a dozen or so common data elements which could be accommodated on a half page or on one card. That card could then be forwarded to a central receiving station where a data tape could be generated and sent back to the colleges. Any college wishing additional information on its students could request that its students fill out separate forms.

The Committee might also recommend studies of bachelor's degree recipients at various University and State University campuses. Here the transcripts of the students receiving degrees could be analyzed to see how many units were earned at which of the State's institutions. One such study done as a doctoral dissertation at UCLA in 1980 showed a high proportion of UCLA's bachelor's degree recipients with units earned at various community colleges. Such studies would assist in gathering answers to questions such as the programs successfully completed by community college transfers, the length

of time that transfers take from college entry to receiving the baccalaureate degree, and the pattern of dropping in and out of various of the State's publicly supported institutions of higher education that cannot be answered with the information currently available.

CALIFORNIA POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION COMMISSION
Ad Hoc Committee on Community College Transfer
July 23, 1984

MINUTES

AD HOC COMMITTEE ON COMMUNITY COLLEGE TRANSFER

Meeting of June 11, 1984

Fresno Room
Capitol Plaza Holiday Room
Sacramento, California

Committee Members Present

Roger C. Pettitt, Chairperson
Darlene M. Laval, Vice Chairperson
Seymour M. Farber
Patricia Gandara
Claudia H. Hampton
Ralph J. Kaplan

Committee Members Absent

Sheldon W. Andelson
Seth P. Brunner
Mario Camara

Chairperson Pettitt called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m. The minutes of the meeting of June 11, 1984, were approved by unanimous voice vote.

EXPERT TESTIMONY — Chairperson Pettitt introduced two experts on community college education that Mr. Callan had invited to speak to the Committee about transfer matters: Paul Elsner, Chancellor of the Maricopa County Community Colleges in Arizona, and Arthur Cohen, President of the Center for the Study of Community Colleges in Los Angeles. (Their testimony is attached.

Paul Elsner

Mr. Elsner began by describing the colleges in the Maricopa County Community College District, including the nature of the students enrolled, student charges, program emphasis, and specially funded projects. He then discussed relationships between community colleges and the public universities in Arizona, contrasting them with relationships in California. He commented on articulation issues related to the process of establishing course-to-course equivalencies, particularly unilateral curriculum changes made by the university to which most Maricopa students transfer. He noted the large, complex committee structure that is utilized to achieve new course equivalencies, with community college and university faculty members serving on the same committees.

Mr. Elsner characterized the Maricopa County Community Colleges as fairly traditional, with an academically oriented faculty. He said that the faculty has been excellent stewards of the public trust, but that a certain amount of rigidity characterizes the system as well. He described the modes in which the colleges offer occupational education and called attention to a two-plus-two program for graduates of such programs who want to continue their education through the baccalaureate degree. He also described at some length a district-wide honors program which will facilitate the transfer of a small number of students to top-level private institutions across the country.

Continuing to discuss transfer matters, Mr. Elsner described the special urban transfer opportunity program that the Ford Foundation has funded this year at one of the Maricopa County Community Colleges and 23 other public community colleges across the country. He concluded his presentation by commenting on differences between Arizona and California in the size and complexity of their systems of higher education, and suggested that the successes of the Maricopa Colleges in the transfer function are due to historical state patterns as much as to initiatives taken by the Colleges.

Responding to questions from Committee members, Mr. Elsner said that the Maricopa Colleges now offer both credit and non-credit remedial courses and that the universities are also teaching a good deal of remedial coursework. He estimated that about half of the Maricopa students are in academic, transfer-oriented programs and half in vocational/technical programs. He was unable to cite statistics on persistence after transfer but noted that transfer students who persist earn grade-point averages that are comparable to those of native students after an initial drop in performance after transfer. He acknowledged that the student tracking system now in place is inadequate with respect to finding out what happens to students, particularly those who are enrolled intermittently and part-time, but said that the district is vigorously seeking a better system.

Asked to comment on counseling for potential transfer students, Mr. Elsner said that there is a good deal of variation among the seven campuses in the Maricopa district and that in essence there is a faculty-driven advisement system in place, rather than an elaborate counseling program. Asked about high school counseling about college, Mr. Elsner reported that 44 percent of the local high school graduates enroll in the Maricopa County Community Colleges, at least in part as the result of a well-financed marketing program. Still he noted that efforts are being made to raise the consciousness of high school principals and counselors about Maricopa Community College opportunities for their graduates.

On another subject, Mr. Elsner observed that the liberal arts appear to be in a steady decline, although the transfer function is holding its own. He pointed out that students in many technology programs are more highly selected than those in liberal arts programs, particularly with respect to mathematics and science preparation, and are potential transfer students in two-plus-two programs. He mentioned efforts at the Maricopa Colleges to reconstitute the humanities, common learnings, and interdisciplinary studies -- for example, to require common reading lists for both liberal arts and vocational students. He also mentioned an about-to-be-instituted general education requirement in computer literacy, noting that the district has a very rich computing technology environment.

Asked about characteristics of the Maricopa students, Mr. Elsner said that the average age is 29 but that the age distribution is essentially bimodal, that is, with large numbers of both young students and those who are relatively old and mature. He also said that about 7.4 percent of Maricopa students are Hispanic, compared with about 14 percent of the population in the Phoenix area; the comparable percentages for Black students and population are 4.5 and 4.0. In this connection he described the transfer opportunity project at South Mountain Community College in some detail and noted the intensity of the support systems which are needed to insure the academic success of students who have historically had poor preparation for college. He suggested that there has been too much randomness in the community college system, in that people have been expected to proceed through the system without support services, but under these conditions many students and especially disadvantaged students do not do well. He said that the success of Hispanic students is also linked to having significant numbers of Hispanics on the faculty and administrative staff, as is true at South Mountain. He also called attention to staff development activities in the Maricopa Colleges dealing with quality and diversity to help faculty and other professionals deal with diversity effectively.

Chairperson Pettitt thanked Mr. Elsner for sharing with the Committee his experiences with both successes and problems.

Arthur M. Cohen

Chairperson Pettitt introduced Arthur M. Cohen, President of the Center for the Study of Community Colleges, Professor of Higher Education at the University of California, Los Angeles, and Director of the ERIC Clearinghouse for Junior Colleges.

After describing the work of the ERIC Clearinghouse and the Center for the Study of Community Colleges, Mr. Cohen asserted that community colleges must play a role in maintaining transfer opportunities for the students they serve since they are the major point of entry into postsecondary education for half of those going to college after high school graduation across the country. He said that they must also stay involved with the liberal arts in order to perpetuate shared values and understandings among Americans and to hold the culture together.

Mr. Cohen pointed to growth in interest in the transfer function during the past five years, before which emphasis was on access for all, that is, getting everyone in. He noted some residual thinking from the access era --for example, confusion about the age distribution of community college students. He confirmed Mr. Elsner's statistics regarding the proportions of students in liberal arts and occupational programs, and the phenomenon of students transferring from both types of programs. He said that transfer education must be conceptualized separately from liberal arts education, since students transfer from all kinds of curricula and some liberal arts students have "terminal" objectives, that is, do not intend to go beyond an associate degree.

Commissioner Gandara asked about reasons for shifts in student goals from occupational to transfer. Mr. Cohen replied that these reasons are numerous.

He suggested that in addition to their interest in getting a job, students prefer occupational programs at the outset because they are much more structured than liberal arts programs, have entrance and exit standards, and sequences of courses and learning experiences. He said that such programs are likely to be successful in holding their students, especially with strong support systems. He characterized the liberal arts in community colleges as drop-in experiences, without connections between courses and faculty, in contrast with occupational courses that have prerequisites and beginning and ending points, and are in a sense linear in nature. He attributed a good deal of the success of community colleges in recent years to their ability to respond quickly to the market demand for people with additional years of education, particularly in occupational programs.

Mr. Cohen called attention to the poor quality of State and national data relating to community college transfer including problems of definition. He suggested that the Committee might well recommend strengthened State data collection, especially for tracking students from the California Community Colleges. He also called attention to weak connections between high schools and community colleges, noting that the latter have tended to look up to the universities in their articulation efforts, not down to the high schools.

On still another topic, Mr. Cohen suggested that common course numbering systems may be useful but are not a panacea. He spoke about the experience of Texas colleges and universities with such a system, and its limitations with respect to differences among colleges even in the same district. He suggested that campus-to-campus agreements are needed since system- and state-wide arrangements are difficult to work out. Mr. Cohen said that studies have shown that differing patterns of faculty organization and management do not seem to have any affect on transfer. On the other hand, he said that he had found some effective structural changes in community colleges to increase student flow to four-year institutions and cited the Miami-Dade Community College experience. He praised campus leadership and local initiations in bringing about change in the community colleges in the transfer function, while noting that it is not the only function of these institutions.

After questions and answers about general education requirements in different types of community college curricula, Mr. Cohen returned to the problem of inadequate data bases, especially student information systems for tracking students through degree and transfer programs. He suggested again that the Committee might well recommend strengthening such data bases. He called attention to a study of recipients of baccalaureate degrees awarded by the University of California at Los Angeles over a three-year period to find out how many originated in Community Colleges. He observed that this kind of retrospective study is more feasible than longitudinal ones that follow students from the time of their entry into postsecondary education to completion of their objectives.

Mr. Cohen advised the Committee to decide whether it is more interested in statewide than in campus information, and suggested that a data system for the State as a whole may be more useful than one designed to fit the needs of individual campuses. He cautioned that the latter would require greater uniformity in the application process in order to get comparable data. He also noted that campus people are not interested in State or national statistics.

Asked what the most serious problem in articulation and transfer is, Mr. Cohen said that the most serious problem seems to have been overcome -- the tendency of community colleges to focus almost exclusively on access, to the exclusion of transfer. As a result, he stated, the University of California and, to a lesser extent, the California State University tend not to look upon the California Community Colleges as feeder institutions.

ADJOURNMENT — Chairperson Pettitt thanked the two speakers and adjourned the meeting at 3:40 p.m.

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